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The Banyan Tree

Newsletter of the Center for Teaching, Learning & Scholarship (CTLTS)
at Georgia Southern University

“RE-SHARPENED TOOLS” REACH ALL LEARNERS

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.
~Jacques Barzun
- Those who know, do.
Those that understand, teach.
~Aristotle
- You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him find it within himself.
~Galileo
- Teaching without learning is merely talking.
~K. Patricia Cross

Lortie (1975) in his classic book, *Schoolteacher*, identified teacher isolation as one of the main impediments to improved student learning. Massy, Wilger and Colbeck (1994) found that college faculty experience the same feelings of isolation as Lortie’s public school teachers and that isolation can “hinder collegiality concerning undergraduate teaching issues” (p. 11). In fact, academy culture, which prizes academic freedom and autonomy, can foster isolation and lead to reduced faculty morale (Lamber *et al*).

Like many faculty who teach large, required courses to non-majors, Mathematics instructor Bridgett Lee wanted to avoid feeling isolated, a real problem with 120-180 students in her MATH 1111 classes. She also knows not every student will like her class, noting that “many students have told me that coming into a college math class is their worst nightmare because they have never been successful math students.” This creates a special dilemma for Lee who “never lowers academic standards or expectations. Regardless of where students start, I hold them accountable for learning course materials.” She believes that an important part of her job “is to reach all students” and this desire led her to look for ways to enhance her teaching, believing that “no matter how experienced I am,

there is always room for improvement.” When she learned about the new *Certificate in Higher Education Teaching* program, she signed up and is the first person to complete the program and receive a certificate.

What does it take to earn a *Certificate*? In addition to receiving feedback from students through a mid-term assessment, program participants receive feedback from a CTLTS consultant following a classroom observation. They also write a philosophy of



Bridgett Lee receives the first Certificate of Higher Education Teaching from Alan Altany.

teaching, and create a Teaching-Learning Portfolio, which can be revised and used for tenure and promotion. While working on a *Certificate*, participants’ reflect on critical teaching-learning issues through written reflections and participation in a Faculty Learning Community, Reading Roundtable or attendance at a CTLTS series like the Teaching Academy or the Course Design

series. According to Alan Altany, CTLTS Director, one of the most beneficial aspects of the program is participation in *Open Doors*—interdisciplinary faculty teams whose members visit each other’s classes and benefit by learning about colleagues’ teaching experiences and practices. That was certainly the case for Lee. During the semester in which Lee participated in *Open Doors*, she “visited a history class, a German class, and a Global Citizens class. Although each class seemed a world away from math, I gained valuable ideas from each.” For example, in a visit to Melissa Gayan’s world history class, Lee observed that “students learned the most when Professor Gayan asked thought provoking questions where students had to compare and contrast.” When Gayan observed Lee’s large math class, Gayan “gave me suggestions on how to make better use of graduate assistants in the classroom.” In Andrea Poling’s class, Lee observed Poling use pictures sometimes and role play to actively engage students in a test review. When Poling visited Lee’s class, she reported that Lee did a good job of making connections to previous materials and checking for understanding, something Poling also does routinely. When Lee entered Emmanuel Clotey’s Global Citizen class, the first thing she saw was
(Continued on page 4)

SPRING FACULTY READING ROUNDTABLE

Each semester the CTLS sponsors and provides books for Reading Roundtables (RRs). To join a Reading Roundtable go to <http://freeonlinesurveys.com/v1/rendersurvey.asp?sid=3sse21vx9924nc81047202> by January 24, 2013. The book selections include the following:

♦ **What the Best College Teachers Do**—join to find out what makes great teachers great

♦ **Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum**

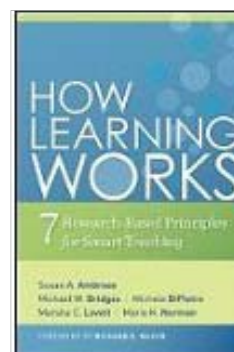
♦ **Engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: How to Develop a Project from Start to Finish**

♦ **Advice for New Faculty Members**—this semester's New Faculty RR selection

♦ **The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal**

♦ **Multiplayer Classroom: Designing Coursework as a Game**

♦ **How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching**—Dr. Michele DiPietro, co-author of this book will be conducting workshops at the CTLS on January 9th. Contact Judith Longfield at jlongfield@georgiasouthern.edu for more information..



In addition to being a Reading Roundtable selection, this book will be read during the Teaching Academy.

AWARDS FROM THE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Awards for Professional Travel

Funds are available to support professional travel for conference and professional meetings directly related to updating knowledge of the discipline and enhancing your professional development as a teacher-scholar. **Spring** (for travel before June 20, 2013). The application deadline is 5:00 p.m., January 20, 2013. **Summer** (for travel after June 20, 2013, but before

October 15, 2013), The application deadline is 5:00 p.m., March 15, 2013. Please read the *Grants for Professional Travel Guidelines* prior to completing the application form.

Faculty Development Summer Award

Awards of \$3000 (salary, purchase, or reimbursement) each will allow faculty members to upgrade skills in the discipline, to develop innovative teaching strate-

gies, to devise new courses/ significantly revise existing ones, to plan significant curriculum changes, or to pursue other creative projects that affect the instructional process. The application deadline is 5:00 p.m., February 8, 2013. Guidelines for all awards are available on the CTLS website: <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ctls/>

"The true teacher defends his pupils against his own personal influence."

~Amos B. Alcott

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING & LEARNING

The January 2013 issue of the CTLS's double-blind, peer-reviewed *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (IJ-SoTL) is available at <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijsoth/v7n1.html>. Also use this

address to sign up to be notified when future issues are published. Currently 5,954 people from 114 countries subscribe to IJSoTL. Authors for the January 2013 issue are from Australia, Canada, Germany, Israel, Nether-

lands, Singapore and the United States. The deadline for submissions for the July 2013 issue is May 15, 2013.



The January 2013 edition of IJ-SoTL now available online.

INVITATION TO EXCELLENCE

Focus on Excellence Lectures

The campus is invited to attend presentations by the previous year's recipients of the Awards for Excellence at 4-5:30 p.m. in the Carter Recital Hall. A reception follows each Lecture. This semester's Lectures are: February 11, 2013 (*Instruction*) Delena Gatch (Physics): "Reflections on Teaching" and Mark Hanna (Management, Marketing & Logistics): "Clouds on the Horizon: Professional Teachers in an Era of Digital Information"

February 27, 2013 (*Service*) Simone Charles (Public Health): "Establishing a Synergistic Model of Scholarship: A Scholarship of Engagement" and Patricia Humphrey (Mathematical Sciences): "The Broken Stool?"

Teaching & Learning Expo

The initial Teaching & Learning Expo (formerly the SoTL Expo) will be held 3-5:00 p.m. on April 17, 2013 in the Atrium of the IT building. The Expo is an opportunity for Georgia

Southern faculty to see what colleagues are doing in their classes and how student learning is being encouraged. Faculty who have innovative ideas or practices for teaching are invited to submit proposals for poster displays. Proposals go through a review process with the submission of proposals period being February 6-22, 2013. The online submission form is at http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/cet/forms/SoTL_Expo/submit_proposal.php.



Focus on Excellence Awards

TEACHING & SCHOLARSHIP: SOTL IMPROVES BOTH

By Dr. Adrienne L. Cohen

As a new faculty member I often have two competing areas of focus. I need to be both the best educator I can be and the best scholar; SoTL allows me to do both. As a professor I have been able to use my classroom as a research venue and my students' assignments as my data. This saves me the time of going "into the field" to collect data. No matter what your discipline, each semester you collect a large number of data that can be used in SoTL research, things like student journals, exams, and pre/posttests results. Depending on

the nature of your research question, all of these sources can help to provide answers.

For example, as part of a SoTL faculty learning community I began a collaborative research project with Nancy Arrington from the College of Education. We were planning to add a service learning component to our classes and wanted to evaluate the effectiveness on students' mastery of learning objectives. After applying for an IRB, we gathered data using pre/post evaluation and student journal entries.

Findings from this research allowed me make changes to the course including a service

learning requirement and additional assignments. Dr. Arrington and I are also presenting a methodological paper on the process and results of this study at a conference and we expect this to lead to a publishable paper. SoTL work has led to both improvements in my course and the development of a scholarly paper. This is good time management. Although SoTL isn't my exclusive form of research, because I aspire to be a better teacher and a better scholar, SoTL opens up both doors for me. I encourage all faculty to explore how they can use SoTL to improve teaching and advance scholarship.

"I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn."

~Albert Einstein

ATTEND SOTL COMMONS IN SAVANNAH

The CTLS will host its 6th annual SoTL Commons: International Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning on March 27-29, 2013 at the Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah. The conference brings together people engaging in SoTL and anyone wanting to improve student learning outcomes in higher education. Keynote speakers

will be Dan Bernstein (University of Kansas), Lynn Taylor (University of Calgary), and Brian Coppola (University of Michigan). Presenters come from many schools such as Mt. Royal University, Mercer University of Regina, Aarhus University, University of Georgia, West Virginia University, University of Hawaii, University of Minnesota, Vanderbilt,

Hong Kong Institute of Education, Central Florida, James Madison, George Mason, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of South Carolina, University of Saskatchewan and Georgia Southern. For conference details, visit: <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijsotl/conference/2013/index.htm>.



March 27-29, attend the SoTL Commons Conference in Savannah.

“RESHARPENED TOOLS” (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1) a class schedule on the board, which Clotey used to keep the class on track. “The thing I liked most about his class was the use of name ‘tents’ that seemed to make the students ‘belong.’” Lee reports she learned a lot about teaching and learning while working on her *Certificate*, and especially enjoyed working with colleagues. “It was a great learning experience, a time to reflect and discuss what I was doing and what I saw others doing in their classrooms. Visiting others’

classes is a great way to remain current and to see how others view what we are teaching and, more importantly, HOW we are teaching. We can all use suggestions on how to re-sharpen our teaching tools so that we can reach all types of student learners.” If you’d like to learn more about the *Certificate in Higher Education Teaching* or how to get involved in the *Open Doors* program, contact Alan Altany at aaltany@georgiasouthern.edu or 478.0049.

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- Lamber, J.; Ardizzone, T.; Dworkin, T.; Guskin, S.; Olsen, D.; Parnell, P.; & Thelen, D. (1993). A “community of scholars?”: Conversations among mid-career faculty at a public research university. *To Improve the Academy*, Vol. 12, pp. 13-26.
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CTLS SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The CTLS offers a variety of services, including:

Individual Consultations

CTLS staff are available to consult with faculty on a range of such things as constructing exams, active lecturing, course design, dealing with disruptive students, course portfolios, etc.

Classroom Observations

Faculty may request a classroom observation to obtain feedback on their teaching and classroom work with students. After observing the class, a CTLS consultant prepares confidential, written feedback based upon the observation. If the instructor wishes, s/he can also meet with the consultant to discuss the class and receive feedback.

Lending Library

Faculty are invited to stop by the CTLS to browse through our book collections. If you know of a book that the CTLS library should have, contact us.

To request a class observation, schedule a consultation or check out a book by email, contact Patricia Hendrix at phendrix@georgiasouthern.edu.

“The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.”

~E.G. Bulwer-Lytton

CHECK OUT ONLINE RESOURCES

Here are some e-resources on designing courses, assessing students’ work, integrating instructional technologies into a class effectively, and teaching online. If you’re not already familiar with these resources, check them out.

- ◆ **Tomorrow’s Professor** (Desk-top Faculty Development): <http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/tomprof/postings.php>
- ◆ **Online Faculty Development Resources** (extensive): <http://www.developfaculty.com/online/>
- ◆ **Active Learning**: <http://www.texascollaborative.org/activelearning.htm>
- ◆ **Faculty Stress**: http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/tips_0102.cfm
- ◆ **Qualitative Research**: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qual.php>

We’re on the Web

<http://academics.georgia.southern.edu/ctls>

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